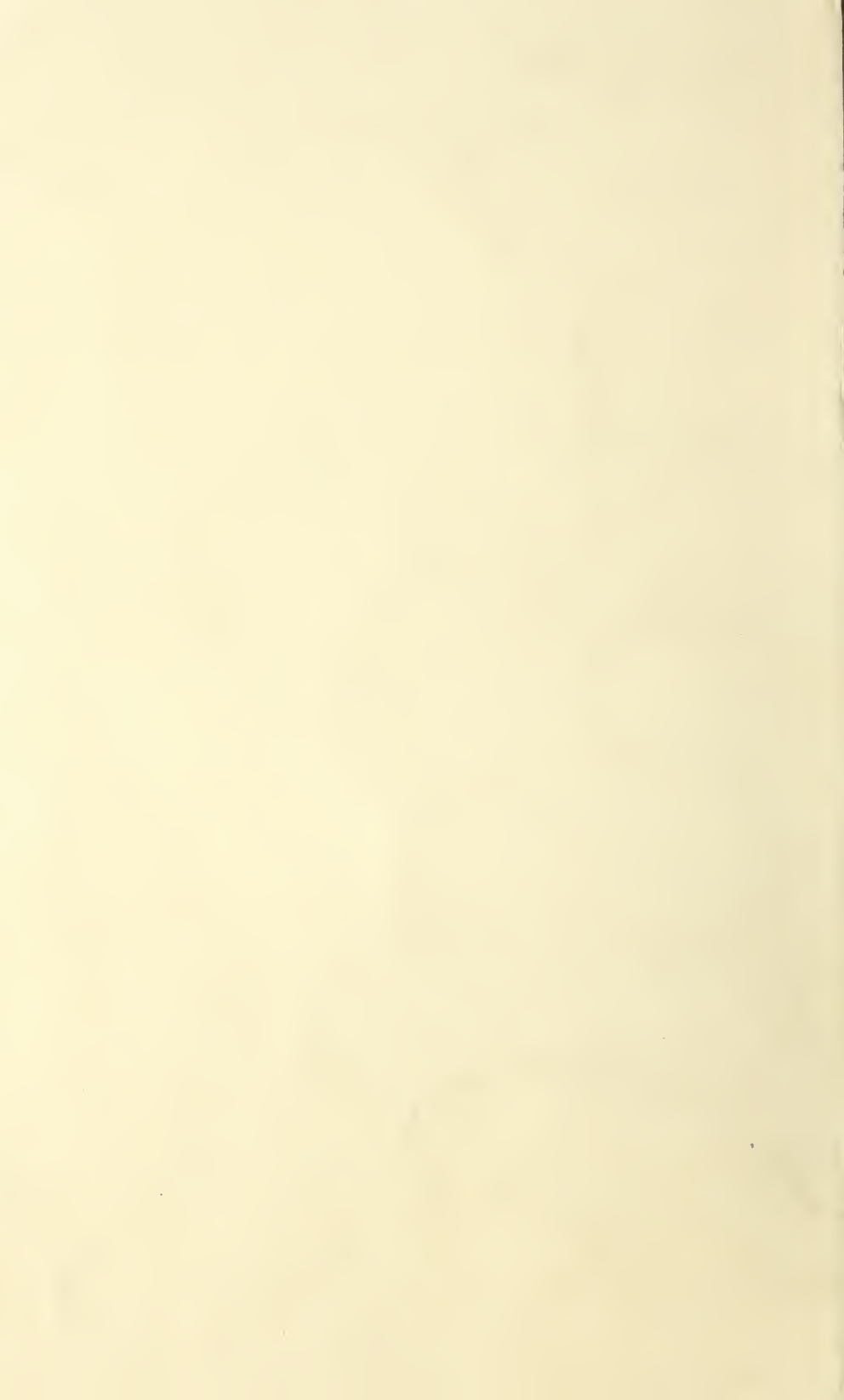


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ROMPERS

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

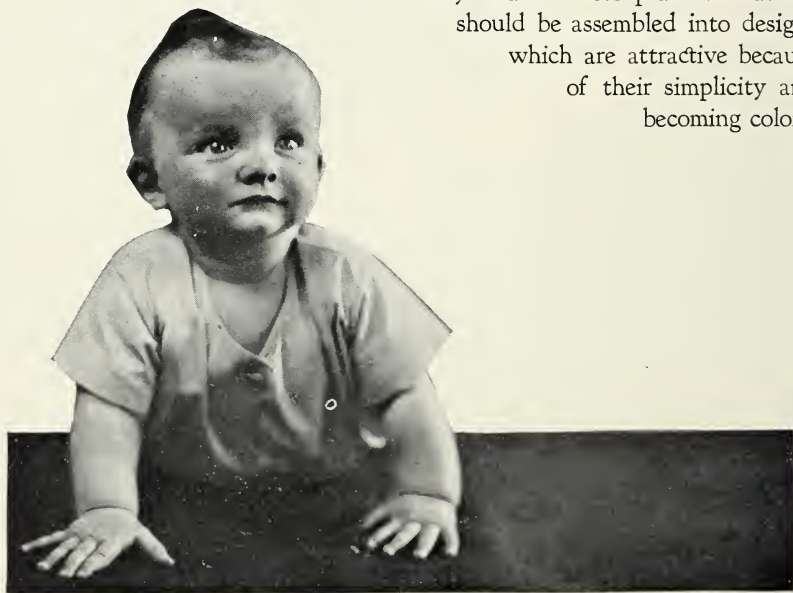
■ ROMPERS ■

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A BABY of 5 or 6 months needs clothes designed especially for his growing activities. Infant dresses are appropriate when sleeping is the main issue of the day, but when the child begins to creep they hamper and discourage him in all his efforts. Even the outfits designed for older children, who have learned to walk well and to do things for themselves, are uncomfortable for creeping babies. At this stage they need garments that fit at the shoulders, are roomy through the body, and are held in at the knees. This type of outfit affords whatever protection is needed; yet the clothing is up and out of the way. Rompers meet all these requirements provided they are properly cut. The foundation of their designs should be those features that allow the freest movement of all parts of the body and efficient handling of the baby at dressing time.

There should be no superfluous style details, for they often distress a baby by their interference with his comfort or movements. Rompers should be simple to construct and easy to launder, as several outfits are needed to keep the creeping baby clean. These practical features should be assembled into designs which are attractive because of their simplicity and becoming colors.



■ Envelope Romper

As the name indicates, the method of closing this romper simulates that of an envelope; it slants from the center front of the neckline to the inside of the leg opening. A further similarity is the triangular extension of the back that laps over the front. There it fastens with three buttons, placed to expedite dressing and changing of diapers. With a romper of this design a child can be laid down on the opened garment and literally buttoned up in it.

Like the tailored romper, this design has a low cut neckline finished with a simple inside facing that extends down the front closing. Inverted pleats at each side of the back and front are stitched from the inside just far enough to make the romper set comfortably to the shoulders. But they are released exactly where more room is needed for free movement.

Small pleats laid in at the side seams provide the extra room which is always needed in the lower back of rompers. This new feature not only makes them more comfortable but also makes them wear and fit longer. Rompers often seem to be outgrown when they are merely too short in the back. These pleats also relieve crotch openings of the strain which frequently causes them to unbutton.

The material chosen for this romper is broadcloth. It tailors neatly, the weave is firm and durable, the texture is soft and comfortable, and the surface is smooth and resistant to soil. This makes laundering easy. Good qualities of broadcloth shrink very little, but it is a wise plan to shrink all romper materials before cutting into them. This does away with guesswork allowances and gives assurance that there will be no difference in the fit after the rompers are laundered.



■ Adjustable Romper

Everything about this romper is extremely simple and practical. Its chief feature is that it can be adjusted to a baby's changing weight and height. Since the romper opens only at the neck and crotch, it is cut on the bias. It yields easily to body movements, and when the strain is relieved the fabric draws back into its original shape. The wide neckline is strengthened by a shell edge and finished with narrow crocheted beading through which a twistless tape is run for adjustment. The tape is fastened at the center front, to prevent it from pulling out when the child is dressed or when the garment is laundered.

The short, open raglan sleeves allow absolute freedom of the arms. Their generous width, both at the armholes and through the brief length of the sleeves themselves, makes it possible for warmer and heavier underwear to be put on without spoiling either the fit or the appearance of the romper.

A new type of crotch closing is made by a shaped extension of the back which is buttoned over the front. This extension is curved in keeping with the soft style of the romper, and the four buttons which hold it in place are arranged so as to avoid unsightly gaps, and to simplify dressing and changing the diaper. A generous lap allows for readjustment of buttons whenever more length is needed.

This romper can be slipped on over the head with one movement, the sleeves adjusted without cramping the arms backwards, and the neck drawn up comfortably and tied at the back. Another advantage of this romper is the ease with which it can be laundered. It lies out flat and will go through a mangle.



■ Tailored Romper

A romper takes the place of a dress and usually is worn over a shirt and diaper. The bulkiness of these garments and the baby's peculiar ways of sitting and moving about demand rompers that are roomy, especially in the lower back. To provide this extra room without making the front too long, two $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pleats may be laid in the back section at the side seams, exactly in line with the hips. The romper shown below illustrates the comfort which this feature allows. Whether the baby sits in his doubled-up fashion or crawls around, his movements can be free and unhampered.

The romper front is long enough for the child to lie on his stomach and rise up on his hands, a position which requires more length in a suit of this type than do standing upright or lying down. To prevent the romper from slipping down over the knees when the baby creeps, the leg openings are curved high at the front and slightly squared at the inside of the legs. This new-shaped leg opening fits comfortably and gives a neat appearance in general to the romper.

Fullness across the back and chest is supplied by inverted pleats which are stitched down about 2 inches on the inside of the romper and released at the exact place where more room is needed for free arm movement. These pleats yield quickly but fold back neatly into place when not in use.

This romper can be put on without lifting the baby unnecessarily. It fastens at the center front, and an extension of the back is drawn up between the legs and buttoned over the front. This type of closing is convenient in changing the diapers. It also simplifies ironing.





■ Dress Romper

This design looks much like a dress, but it has the comforts of a romper. The sleeves are raglan like those shown in the adjustable romper, and their roominess permits additional underwear to be put on without spoiling their fit. The fullness across the back and front is shirred and stitched to stay pieces which make the rompers fit the shoulders. The gathers are shifted slightly to the sides where fullness is often needed to relieve sleeve strains.

The long opening at the back is fastened with three small, flat buttons. This opening is sufficiently long for the romper to be slipped on over the head quickly, and it spreads so that the arms can be put through the sleeves without restriction. Dressing is less irksome for both the baby and his mother when clothes go on easily.

This romper has the double pleat feature which lengthens the lower back and makes it comfortable. A shaped extension of the back is fastened over the lower front with four buttons. This type of closing is neat in design, it simplifies dressing and even allows for adjustment as the baby grows taller. An added advantage is that the romper stays closed, and there is no danger of having to refasten buttons repeatedly as is often necessary on rompers that open directly through the crotch and have no additional back length.

Lawn in plain colors or prints are appropriate for this romper. If prints are chosen they should be very small in size and delicate in coloring. A bit of stitchery may be used to emphasize the lines of shirring about the face, but it should always be flat, simple, and as durable and easily laundered as the romper which it trims.

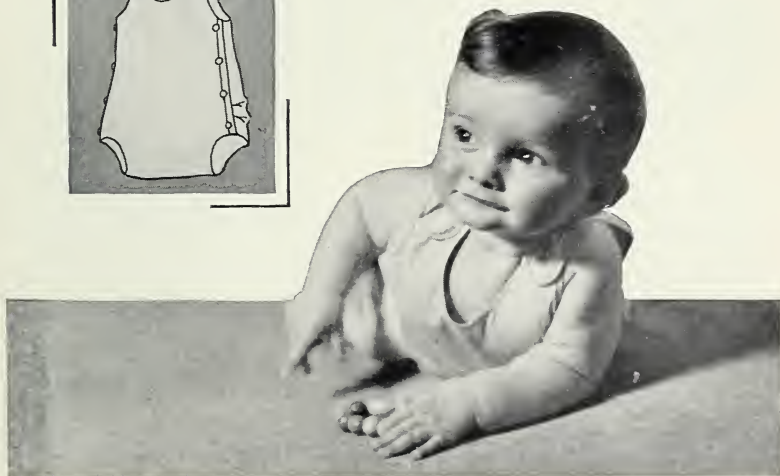
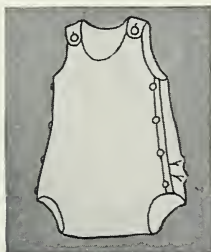
■ Summer Romper

This cool romper is designed for hot days when clothes are more a matter of convention than of necessity. It is suitable for those away-from-home trips which a baby often has to make in spite of the hot weather. The armholes and neckline are deeply cut so that the romper is airy and not apt to stick and bind. It allows for freedom and encourages the baby to exercise. This romper may also serve as a coverall for the baby's best dress for a brief period when occasion demands that it be kept clean.

Two $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pleats are laid in at the sides of the lower back to provide the extra room which is always needed for babies who merely lie and kick or for those who creep. Leg openings are well curved at the front and squared at the inside of the leg so that no activity of the baby can cause them to slide down over his knees. This is of special importance during the period when the baby crawls on all fours.

The romper fastens at the side seams with four buttons, but the usual worked buttonholes are replaced by strip buttonholes which are easier and quicker to make. The upper back extends over the shoulders and the rounded tabs are then buttoned down over the front. Here they are easy to manage at dressing time.

Both construction and laundering of this summer romper are easy. It is cut in one piece and finished simply with a binding of self-material, or a contrasting one if the quality matches. The romper can be opened out flat and ironed in a few minutes.



■ Self-Help Rompers

When babies are venturing to take their first steps they are also learning to do things with their hands as well as their feet. Toys are not the only means with which to encourage manipulation. Every-day play clothes that are easy to put on and to fasten are excellent for this purpose and also teach self-reliance.

The little girl on the left wears a 2-piece romper, consisting of a 2-button surplice waist and French panties which illustrate the self-help principle. The panties are made high at the waist and finished with an inside facing rather than a band. Two inverted pleats, one on each side, provide fullness at the back. For convenience the back laps over the front, and tab ends serve as something to hold on to while the buttons are being fastened. These tabs also allow buttonholes to be placed in line with placket openings. This prevents gapping. An extra pair of panties saves laundering the entire suit in an emergency.

This little girl's playmate wears a 1-piece romper. It has a long center front placket with three good sized buttons that make dressing easy. The back drop has four supporting buttons arranged two at each side. They are easy to reach, and the pull on the shoulders is distributed evenly and comfortably. A flat simulated collar which never musses gives the desired touch of contrast to the green pin-check gingham.

Both suits have a pocket, for little 2-year olds should always have their own handkerchiefs.



